

THE BIG PRINT

THE OTHER NORTH-EAST PAPER

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WESTERTON - NOW PARENTS WANT FUNDS PROBE

Parents of children attending Westerton Primary have called on Grampian Regional Council to hold a further inquiry into the running of Westerton's School Funds. The Funds have been the subject of controversy following teachers' allegations that headmaster Harold Boorer had been misusing the School Funds. Meanwhile the national executive of the E.I.S., the teachers' trade union, have forced the local E.I.S. to drop their demand for a full public enquiry into the management of the funds.

The Big Print has interviewed several parents of Westerton pupils. To safeguard their children and themselves they have asked us not to reveal their names. One parent told The Big Print: "I think they should look further into the situation. I don't think it's good enough for the Council to say there's no books so they can't look into it further. They should find out what's happened to the money that's been raised. I think the parents should

be involved in the committee that deals with the School Funds. At the school my son used to go to (in Aberdeen), the parents were kept informed of the amount of money raised, and asked what they thought the money raised should be spent on." Another parent said, "It's wrong that the head should have had control of the funds himself and no-one else. "If the parents started a petition maybe then something would get done ... I'd sign it."



Westerton pupils greet THE BIG PRINT photographer at their school in Northfield, Aberdeen

Another parent with children at Westerton told us, "I think there should be an inquiry into what's happened. The headmaster should have kept records."

"We were never told anything about how much was raised or what it was spent on."

Bob Middleton, the local regional councillor, has also talked to parents of Westerton pupils. He told The Big Print, "I felt that the feeling of the parents I talked to was that there should be a further investigation."

Union position

When the Westerton teachers and local E.I.S. officials met Gordon Beattie, the executive's national negotiating secretary, on 26th June, Mr. Beattie stated that the Executive's view was that the Westerton issue should be dropped. The teachers should not be concerned with money raised for School Funds.

The Westerton teachers and local E.I.S. officials argued that they wanted a full public inquiry, and said they were very disappointed with the Executive's attitude.

Following the meeting a statement was issued that "Agreement was reached on certain areas of the problem which will be further pursued."

Arthur Lennox, E.I.S. Aberdeen association secretary, told The Big Print, "The official policy of the local association is now in line with national policy - that it deplors the publicity given to the Westerton situation and is not pursuing any

further investigation. Mr. Lennox told us local association had their policy being told of the executive's position declined to say who were being 'further

Council mee

At the Regional Education Committee 4th, Chief Executive McNaughton stated Boorer had provided reported £1,150 worth of facilities bought for School Funds. But teachers are not convinced that this figure is accurate, and Councillor Middleton told The Big Print, "I'm not happy about the figure." What's more, teachers estimate that £1,000 could have been raised in one year of raising at Westerton. Boorer has been running School Funds, without any records, for nine years.

Also revealed at the Education Committee was that long ago as Autumn Councillor Middleton asked the Education Department to investigate the running of the Westerton School Funds.

And in the same period Education Departmentors expressed concern the Westerton School set-up following a the school.

The Education Committee heard of a bizarre which had occurred at Westerton. When questioned Councillor Middleton admitted that he had admitted that teachers' letter of complaint had described how, questioned by teachers

CONTINUED ON

Council workers in danger



The debris which fell from the ceiling and floored Council employee Mr. Jack Horne

Aberdeen District Council has been accused of negligence in considering the safety and welfare of their employees by the Aberdeen City District Branch of NALGO in their paper NALGO NEWS, following the Town Sergeant's recent escape from serious injury.

As Mr. Jack Horne was changing from his uniform after his evening's work, a large part of the ceiling in the changing room of the Old Town House fell on him, catching him on the shoulder and upper arms. If he had been standing an inch or two the other way, he

could have been seriously injured or even killed.

Yet, since the accident the District Council has taken little or no action to authorise the necessary maintenance work to the Town House. Even before the accident, the Council was aware of the dangerous condition of parts of the old section of the Town House. There is urgent need for work to be carried out on the building fabric, and the Factories Inspector, called in after the accident, has presented the Council with a long list of faults, including seri-

ously cracked plaster and defective electrical work.

In addition, the Aberdeen City District Branch of NALGO has received no reply to their letter expressing concern at the state of affairs and the working conditions of NALGO members.

If the victim had been the Provost would action have been speedier?

Or are the council blinded by the gleam from the £17,000 doors on the new Town House?



EDITORIAL

THE BIG PRINT is a monthly local libertarian socialist newspaper, published by a collective of around 10 people who believe there should be an alternative coverage of local issues to that provided by the commercial press. We welcome contributions, letters and information and also hope that any other interested people of libertarian socialist views will join with us in producing the paper. PUBLISHED BY THE BIG PRINT, BOX 13, C/O 163 KING ST, ABERDEEN.

Stop the cover-up

In the June issue of THE BIG PRINT, we reported that teachers at Westerton Primary had made serious allegations concerning their headmaster's misuse and mismanagement of the School Funds. The events of the last month strongly suggest that all these allegations are true.

We reported that the teachers had alleged that headmaster Mr. Boorer could not produce any accounts for the School Funds. At the Grampian Regional Council Education Committee meeting on 4th July, Chief Executive Douglas McNaughton stated in his official report on the Westerton situation, "There were no records whatsoever for the Westerton School Funds prior to 31st December 1977".

We reported that the teachers had alleged that Mr. Boorer had sole control of the School Funds. Wilson Stephen, convener of the Council's Education Committee, has stated in the 'Evening Express' of 23rd June and to the Education Committee that the teachers were not involved in deciding how the School Funds were used and that "the head was running things as a one-man show."

We reported that the teachers had alleged that children at the school were being charged for facilities which should have been free. In the signed statement by twelve of the Westerton teachers in the 'Evening Express' of June 20th they state, "...most members of the staff could testify that the children were charged for playing badminton and for attending a three-weekly disco after school hours."

We reported that the teachers had alleged that the amount spent from the School Funds on facilities did not appear to match the amount of money raised. The Aberdeen Branch of the E.I.S., the teachers' trade union, in their statement in the P&J on 26th June said, "The cost of these items (bought from the School Fund), so far as we know, would not appear to adequately account for the sums of money which might reasonably be expected to be involved."

Thus there are four major allegations concerning the Westerton School Funds. The Council have officially admitted that two of the allegations are true, and all the evidence indicates that the other two are also true.

Yet the Regional Council are refusing to hold a full investigation. And still they are allowing Mr. Boorer to continue as headmaster.

The Westerton episode is a perfect example of how our supposedly 'democratic' system does not in fact at all reflect the wishes and interests of the majority of people. The teachers at Westerton want a further investigation. All the indications are that the majority of parents want a further investigation. But the wishes of the people directly involved are over-ruled by their supposed representatives. And if you stay within the electoral system there's nothing you can do about it. The next Regional Council elections are four years away.

It would be a mistake to view headmaster Mr. Boorer's actions in keeping sole control of the School Funds as totally exceptional. It would be more accurate to see his behaviour just as a particularly blatant example of what exists to a greater or lesser extent in all schools — the 'dictatorship of the head'. THE BIG PRINT is not concerned with attacking Mr. Boorer as an individual. We are concerned with attacking the hierarchical structure in schools which puts so much decision-making power in the hands of one person. In the society we are working to help create, decisions in schools, or in whatever educational set-up existed, would be a joint and equal responsibility of all those concerned — teachers, pupils and parents alike.

There's a lot can be learnt from the way in which the protests about the Westerton situation were made. Individual complaints got nowhere. It was only when the teachers acted collectively and threatened to take strike action that they pushed the Council into doing something. It's also noteworthy that THE BIG PRINT and later the 'P & J' and 'Evening Express' making Westerton a public issue, brought demands for further action back onto the agenda when the whole issue had looked like dying away.

SMALL PRINT



rumours breed fast

First they threaten to dig up Deeside for uranium. Then they talk about looking for sites in the North-East to bury their nuclear waste. The next move could be the worst of all. THE BIG PRINT doesn't normally go in for rumours (we print the facts) but we do hear that the site planned for Britain's first fast-breeder nuclear power-station (bigger, better and nastier than before) is not Dounreay, not Surbiton, but Whitehills, about five miles from Banff, forty from Aberdeen and six hundred from Whitehall. If the fast-breeder programme goes ahead, construction could start in the next ten years.



The local branch of the E.I.S. gave admirable support to the Westerton teachers, twelve of whom courageously issued a signed public statement fully detailing their complaints. But the National Executive of the E.I.S., stepped in, declared that the problems at Westerton were "solved", and virtually ordered the local E.I.S. to drop their demand for a public inquiry.

This was typical of national trade union bureaucrats. Such people have become part of the 'establishment', they don't want to rock the boat, and they want power in the union to be in their hands, not with the local members.

So what's to happen now? It's intolerable that nothing more should be done. Teachers estimate that around £1,000 per year could have been raised over the nine years of Mr. Boorer's headship. Mr. Boorer only claims to account for £1,150 worth of facilities bought. If money is missing it means the children at the school are being deprived of facilities which should rightfully be theirs.

What's more, there's the effect on the school caused by Mr. Boorer continuing as head. The tension between Mr. Boorer and the staff results in an atmosphere which can't be good for anyone, least of all the children.

The best hope lies with people directly involved, such as the teachers and parents, forcing the authorities to act. With the teachers having suffered a setback through the backstabbing of the E.I.S. Executive, perhaps it's now over to the parents. We know that many of them are dissatisfied with the situation. Will they join together to press for a full investigation into what's happened to the money which should be providing facilities for their children?

despicable

Our reporter was rather fearful for his safety as certain Conservative councillors thundered condemnation at THE BIG PRINT during the Westerton School Funds debate at the Regional Council's Education Committee meeting. It was strange however how no-one could actually bring themselves to utter this dreadful paper's name.

First on the attack was Committee convener Wilson Stephen, as he declaimed dramatically:

"There have been slurs and innuendoes over the Westerton issue, culminating in that despicable report in a local rag."

It is believed the councillor was not referring to either the 'Press & Journal' or the 'Evening Express'.

Next to have a go was Councillor Harry Sim. He spoke darkly of "interference from outside sources who have no interests but stirring up trouble."

This remark caused considerable consternation on the Labour benches as Councillor Bob Middleton mistakenly thought Councillor Sim was referring to him.

However he was soon put right as Councillor Sim explained:

"I am referring to this... er... paper. I saw comments from this paper which had no direct interest in Westerton."

We see no need to reply to the councillors' attacks except to point out that, as shown in our editorial, the events of the last few weeks strongly suggest that all the Westerton teachers' allegations which we reported are true. Which is doubtless precisely why our councillors were so annoyed.

thought police



Results of experiments which have been going on at Aberdeen University's Psychology Department will be used to help police

"improve" their system of identifying suspects. Students who took part in the tests were shown a short

videotape of a person speaking, then asked to say how far they believed what s/he said, told to identify the person by picking his or her mug-shot from a selection of such photos and asked how confident they were in making these decisions.

Only when the students had completed the experiment and were being thanked for their co-operation did they learn that the findings of these studies, if shown to be useful, would be passed on to the police. The Department hadn't considered that the students might not want to "help the police" in this way and might resent being used.

Some people think that with about 5,000,000 peoples' names on files, a giant central computer in London and lots of other tricks up their sleeves, the police are looking less like the friendly, helpful bobby and more like Agents of Big Brother.

OFFSHORE ACTION

Supply Boat Workers Steam Ahead

Seamen working on the oil rig supply boats have rejected a 10% wage offer.

The employers are refusing to increase their offer, claiming they are bound by Phase III. The seamen's union Executive Council are now to consider the situation—and the supply boat seamen are concerned that the Executive might take control of the negotiations away from the local members.

At a special meeting of the Branch on July 9th the seamen decided to uphold their negotiating committee's decision to reject the employer's 10% offer. At present seamen are making £76 gross for a 77-hour week. They are demanding £2 an hour for a 40-hour week; the introduction of overtime rates; payment for dangerous and difficult work such as towing and cable-changing—plus many other improvements in terms and conditions.

The meeting discussed the importance of keeping control over the negotia-



tions in the hands of the local seamen. Branch Secretary Harry Bygate told the Big Print, "The Branch have passed a motion stating that in any further negotiations the local supply boat committee should be involved. There is a genuine fear that the Executive Council could take over the negotiations."

Under the rules of the National Union of Seamen, the power to decide to take industrial action does not rest with the workers

directly involved but with the National Executive.

This is the second episode recently in which the N.U.S. Aberdeen Branch have shown they're determined that decision-making power should rest with the rank and file seamen. When the supply boat negotiating committee was being formed the Branch insisted that it should include working seamen and not be composed entirely of full-time union officials.

Catering Workers Stir Things Up

Newly unionised Offshore Catering Service Workers have won a "substantial" wage rise plus considerable improvements in conditions. Now an increasing number of offshore catering workers in other companies are joining the union and as we go to press preparations are being made for a ballot on union recognition at Ossco Services Ltd.

As reported in the Big Print No 3 O.C.S. employees recently became the first major group of offshore catering workers to become unionised. They put in a claim to increase their wages from £46 to £90 per week and to improve many aspects of their conditions. While the exact amount of the wage rise is not being made public Seamen's Union Branch Secretary Harry Bygate described it as "a substantial rise over and above the £14 interim rise already paid." The agree-

ment also involves a guarantee that all necessary safety gear will be supplied free of charge, the payment of overtime for working public holidays, and the introduction of disciplinary and grievance procedures. The details of a manning agreement and increased travelling expenses are to be discussed later.

The negotiations with O.C.S. in London were conducted by both shop stewards and full time officials of the National Union of Seamen and the Transport and General Workers Union. The involvement of shop floor representatives is a hopeful sign - unionisation in itself is no guarantee of improved conditions and it will only be through the development of strong shop floor organisation that the O.C.S. employees will gain the benefits of workers being organised together.

Overloaded crane kills operator

A recent fatal accident inquiry into the death of an off-shore crane operator revealed that his employers were operating with a blatant disregard for safety procedures. A crane was lifting three times its maximum allowed

weight when it collapsed killing its operator. It was found at the inquiry at Aberdeen Sheriff Court into the death of Santa Fe International Services employee George Rogers. The crane was fitted with a warning alarm which sounded

when it was overloaded—but this had been made inoperative by the cutting of its control wire. In fact the lift was being made by the wrong crane. The larger crane which should have been used was out of order. The rig

manager claimed that this was due to normal wear and tear. However, the expert witness from the Department of Energy considered that the crane's non-functioning "seemed to be the result of massive overload" — thus providing evidence that

Santa Fe regularly had their cranes lift loads which were too heavy. For how much longer are workers going to be killed in the North Sea by the oil companies consistently putting production and profit before safety?

Westerton Primary

CONT. FROM PAGE 1

the School Funds, headmaster Mr. Boorer had pulled a canvas bag out of his pocket and exclaimed, "These are the School Funds, here in this bag." The major decision of the Education Committee was of course to reject Councillor Middleton's motion calling for a further inquiry into the running of the Westerton School Funds.

Grievance

Along with the misuse of School Funds, one of the teachers' complaints against Mr. Boorer was the way in which he victimised teachers who complained about his running of the school. Now one of the teachers who had been unfairly disciplined has been successful in pursuing a grievance against Mr. Boorer — she has received an apology from Director of Education James Michie.

District Council found Guilty

Aberdeen District Council have been found guilty of breaking the 1975 Sex Discrimination Act. This was revealed after the Equal Opportunities Commission ruled that an advertisement by the Housing Management Department in the 'Evening Express' of 21st February was unlawful.

The advert asked for a married couple to take up the duties of Assistant Wardens at a sheltered housing scheme, stating that "the husband will be free to follow his normal occupation, but will have certain duties to perform." This was clearly offering a full-time job to the woman and a part-time job to the man. The possibility that the wife might want to carry on full-time employment instead of the husband does not seem to have occurred to the author of the advert.

The attitude of the EOC to the case seems peculiar. NALGO NEWS reports in its latest issue that, accord-

ing to documents they have, while the 'Evening Express' has had to give assurances that in future they will attempt to comply with the Act, the Council has not even received a reminder of their responsibilities.



NALGO NEWS calls for an investigation into the whole attitude of the Council towards women: they are forced into low-paid secretarial and clerical jobs, while men

have almost complete control of the highest grades. Provision for maternity leave and nursery care are abysmal and the attitude that women only work for pin-money is prevalent. Indeed, discrimination extends right down to office life, where even in the vexed

MS Print

OUT SOON!!

The first issue of MsPrint, a new Scottish feminist magazine. MsPrint follows on from the Scottish Womens Liberation Journal, which used to sell over 100 copies in Aberdeen, and contained several articles by women in the area.

Articles in this issue of MsPrint include an interview with a woman who has been working as a welder for over 20 years in Dundee; one woman's view of feminism; two articles about violence against women in Scotland — rape and battered women. We have an article about the history of

question of tea-making, women mostly make the tea. Men not making the tea isn't breaking the law of course, but it is this attitude that lies at the root of the cases that go to the tribunals and the EOC.

patchwork quilts as women's art plus reviews, poems, comment * MORE.

In future we hope to have articles commenting on the experiences of Scottish women e.g. women's work in fishing communities, feminism and Scottish culture, growing up a Catholic girl, the relationship between Socialism and feminism and the effects of the Assembly and new legislation on women's rights.

Available price 25p from BOOMTOWN BOOKS, 167 King St. or Ros Barrie, 39 Summerfield Terrace.

ABERDEEN WOMENS LIBERATION NEWSLETTER: available from Elaine Lord, c/o 6 St. Machar Place, Aberdeen.

P.O. Workers Take Action

North-East Post Office engineers have decided to hold a one-day strike followed by a work to rule if any of their members are sacked or suspended for taking industrial action in support of their claim for a 35-hour week. The decision was taken at a branch meeting held in St. Katherine's on 6th July. Some engineers present urged stronger action. They advocated an all-out strike if management sacked or suspended anyone. But it was ruled that this proposal could not be discussed since the branch had to follow conference policy, which at present did not extend to taking all-out strike action.

The engineers decided to organise a weekly levy of 25p per person to help pay the wages of Dundee and Edinburgh engineers suspen-



Post Office engineers marching in London recently for a 35-hour week.

ded for refusing to install new equipment. The meeting was well-attended, with about 150 present, but an engineer who spoke to The Big Print told us it had been rather bureaucratically run, resulting in only a few people participating.

The Big Print contacted the local Post Office Engineering Union (POEU) branch Secretary, Mr. Robert Crichton, for the union's views on the progress and effect of the strike in the North-East, but he declined to make any statement.

The Post Office engineers

want a 35-hour week, without any loss of pay and without any productivity deal attached. A major impetus for their claim is the Post Office's plans for new electronic telephone exchanges requiring only a fraction of the labour currently needed. While such technology could potentially benefit workers by reducing everyone's working week, the engineers fear the P.O. management aim to use it to reduce costs and increase profitability by phasing out thousands of jobs.

The POEU have been discussing the 35-hour week claim with the Post Office for seven years. The latest talks broke down in deadlock in May. Currently the engineers are pursuing their claim by refusing to commission new telephone exchanges, refusing to install new equipment and banning overtime.

Gay Pride '78

Gay Pride week 1978 was a ten-day festival in London at the beginning of July, organised by and for Gay people to celebrate our gay identity. The festival included plays, films, exhibitions, discos and, on July 8th, a carnival march which was attended by members of Aberdeen Gay Activist Alliance. The march was disappointingly small and the route was bad, but it was good to see gays out on the streets demonstrating our refusal to be ashamed, especially after a year which

has seen the successful prosecution of Gay News, many malicious assaults on lesbians in the national press, several attacks on gay pubs by National Front members, and increased harassment by the police.

The Gay Activist Alliance, formed to combat such instances of direct oppression, held its six-weekly meeting/conference in London on the day after the march. Aberdeen Gay Activist Alliance was represented by five lesbians.

There were workshops on G.A.A.'s attitudes towards

paedophilia; on the forthcoming election and G.A.A.'s involvement in it, if any. One on how to convince the

Campaign for Homosexual Equality, at its annual conference, that G.A.A. is not a rival organisation and needs help and support.

Another on Anti-fascism and the fight for Gay and Women's Equality, at its annual conference, that G.A.A. is not a rival organisation and needs help and support. A workshop discussing growing police harassment of gays and how to combat it; another on the campaign on W.H. Smiths to attempt to

force them to re-stock Gay News. Finally a workshop on a campaign against discrimination against lesbians in gay pubs and clubs.

A new secretariat was chosen as Brighton's six months is almost finished - Oxford are now the contact group. Last but not least the next national G.A.A. meeting is for two days in Edinburgh in September. It has finally been recognised by the Southerners that Scotland exists - lets hope they all make the effort to get here.

Fusion Against Nukes

A meeting of forty delegates from anti-nuclear groups throughout the country formally set up the "Torness Alliance" in Edinburgh on the 8th July. Its purpose is to carry out the principles of the "Torness Declaration of Nuclear Resistance" which was drawn up and signed by over one hundred groups from all corners of the

U.K., including six groups from Aberdeen, at the recent occupation of the Torness site. The Declaration states that "all necessary non-violent steps (including further occupations of the site) will be taken to peacefully resist the construction of an Advanced Gas Cooled Reactor at Torness". The establishment of the Alliance is a direct response to the Secretary of State for Scotland's announcement in June that plans to build an AGR had been approved without calling a further public enquiry.

A spokesperson for the Alliance said, "Torness is a national focus for international concern about nuclear power. People locally and nationally see it as a very real threat to their futures and recognise that this dangerous

Black Box



Anti-nuclear power demonstrators rally at Torness in May.

technology can only lead to increased environmental pollution and will increase the risk of nuclear war. As the meeting dispersed delegates were in optimistic mood, and claimed that, bearing in mind the incredible response to the May

occupation, thousands of people were expected to rally to the campaign and resist the atomic menace, and foresaw a good response to the "Torness Alliance Appeal Fund" shortly to be launched.

RAR Concert Ban?

Speculation surrounds the recent decision by the Leisure and Recreation Department not to give permission for a Rock Against Racism concert to be held at the park on Union Terrace. But it isn't a total ban and the decision is not final.

In reply to a request by the newly-formed branch of the Anti-Nazi League, the Department drew attention to two bye-laws. One of these made it illegal for "political" statements to be made in the park, and the other referred the whole issue to the District Council. The next meeting of the council isn't until August.

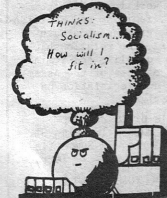
It would seem that there is no connection between this decision and the ban on the A.N.L. Carnival by local authorities in Edinburgh.

The last few years have seen free speech and the right to hold meetings and demonstrations come increasingly under attack (often as a direct result of National Front activity) and so it's particularly important that the right to assemble and the right to organise our own entertainment form an integral part of a broad anti-fascist strategy. Nevertheless, general opinion is that it's unlikely that the council can reject the concert on the above grounds alone.

N.E. Nuclear Waste Threat

The United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) have expressed interest in the granites of North East Scotland for testing for possible nuclear waste dumping. Since the technology for high level radioactive waste disposal is entirely theoretical, and likely to remain so for some decades (or possibly for the millennia over which the stuff will remain dangerous) it seems irresponsible for the UKAEA to press for nuclear expansion at the same time. As for testing sites in the North East, like other remote hard rock areas in Scotland, these seem to have been chosen to avoid excessive hostile public reaction. After all the London clays seem equally suitable.... but the nuclear state might not over-rule the likely public reaction.

As the technology's unproven, sites for testing are almost certain to become sites for dumping, which will be safe as long as nothing goes wrong. Given the nature of the wastes, something's bound to go wrong eventually....



Is there Life after School?

Last month, a new and up-dated **SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR SCHOOL-LEAVERS** was published by the Workers' Educational Association. In June every year, hundreds of school students leave school knowing little about basic things that one needs to know for living in society today e.g. tax, how to look for work, how to claim supplementary benefit, etc. The **SURVIVAL GUIDE** is designed to provide the information that schools ignore in their obsession with exams.

It is exactly what it says it is. The Guide starts with coverage of rights at work and goes on to explain about trade unions, what to do if you are ill at work, tax, national insurance, what your pay is made up of and what to do about problems at work. There is a section on health, covering dieting, alcohol, smoking and other drugs, explaining the effects of each. Contraception, abortion, sexually-transmitted diseases, mental health and homosexuality are also covered. The final section covers one's rights under the law, what to do if one is arrested or in police custody and explains legal aid and the basics of the Scottish legal system.

The Guide is prefaced with the text of a play that was performed for school-leavers earlier this year, called **Looking for a Job**, included with it are factsheets on looking for work, supplementary benefit and the army.

"The play was performed by school-leavers and reflected their own experiences", said Allison Linklater, one of the members of the team that assisted in researching material for the Guide. "In the play, they find that they can't get jobs without qualifications and



that these qualifications often have little relevance to the job."

She added, "In discussions after the play most school-leavers said that they wouldn't have a job on leaving school and many said they wouldn't sign on as they didn't know much about it. It hadn't been explained in school."

Not only does it provide complicated information in a clear, easily-read style, but it is also thought-provoking, containing discussion points and questions. Ms. Linklater pointed out that it was also designed to be used on courses for school-leavers and they were hoping for bulk orders from schools.

Catherine Miller, another member of the team, and Ms. Linklater both agreed:

"Part of the value of the Guide is as a morale-booster. It helps school-leavers see that it isn't their fault they can't find work, that there are other causes. It shows there are others in the same situation. Also it's needed as it's difficult to know what you're entitled to when going round all the different offices."

The Guide, price 30p, can be obtained from Boomtown Books, 167 King Street; The Other Record Shop, 224 Union Street; or from W.E.A., Kittybrewster Shopping Centre.

News from Everywhere

In NEWS FROM EVERYWHERE we bring you news stories from outside Aberdeen which receive little or no coverage in the commercial press. Many of the items are taken from the PEOPLES NEWS SERVICE.

Dampness

After the revelation in Big Print (no. 2) that up to 10,000 council houses in Aberdeen have a dampness problem, news comes to us of active campaigns in other parts of the country.

Manchester: Turkey Lane Rising Damp Action Group was formed to carry out a survey on the number of flats and rooms affected with fungus and insects, and the nervous and respiratory disorders of residents. What they say they need is better insulation and improved ventilation. The council have agreed to arrange a meeting to discuss the issue further.

(Source: MARC Times, May 78)

Salford: A tenant, Mr Kay of Coronation St., assisted by Regent Welfare Rights, successfully prosecuted the council under Section 99 of the Public Health Act 1936. Magistrates gave Salford council twenty-eight days to do repairs to the house. The council were also ordered to pay costs of £100.

(Source: MARC Times, May 78)

London: The Thornhill Weighborough Project, Islington, helped a family successfully prosecute the council for failing to take any action against the dampness problem, under Section 99 of the Public Health Act 1936. Next August they intend taking the issue up with other tenants in the area. Meanwhile the original family are now putting in a claim for compensation against the council for damage to furnishings and the loss of the use of their rooms.

(Source: Thornhill Forum, June 1978)

Harassment

London: **Garners Steak House Strike**

A confidential report by legal workers has revealed an unprecedented level of petty prosecutions and threats and abuse to pickets from the police at the Garners Steak House strike now entering its twenty-second week. According to the report, police have enormous discretion and absolute power to do just as they wish to the pickets. One man who was arrested was told by the policeman that he "had the power and could finish any one of you off".

The nature of the offences are so petty that the defendants are not automatically entitled to legal aid.

As long as the picket remains small no-one can be sure of avoiding arrest. If they are going to succeed there must be a bigger picket and more concrete support from the trade unions.

(Source: People's News Service 150-July 78).

Political police

In the wake of a lot of bad publicity recently against the special police forces, as well as questions in Parliament about who they are and who controls them, the so-called 'Anti Terrorist Squad' are showing their true role. Four anarchists have already been arrested and charged with 'conspiracy to cause explosions with persons known and unknown', and it looks as if there might be more.

On May 24th Iris Mills and Ronan Bennet were picked up after police raided their small Bayswater flat and found 'chemicals and wiring'. Shortly afterwards on June 2nd Dafydd Ladd was arrested simply because his finger prints are said to have been found in the flat. Stew Carr was arrested in Gillingham in mid June.

All four have been refused bail and are being held in Top Security at Brixton Prison, including Dafydd who urgently needs medical treatment. He might 'commit further offences' and was one of a group of 'idealistic persons who would take positive steps to overthrow society', said Detective Superintendent Bradbury of the Anti Terrorist Squad.

Iris Mills is the first woman to be held in this Mens' Prison since the Price Sisters in 1975.

The political nature of the arrests and charge is obvious particularly at a time when Nazi groups are increasingly resorting to terrorist and paramilitary activities and yet manage to escape arrest.

Iris and Ronan were the Huddersfield contacts of the Anarchist Black Cross when they were previously arrested and detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act a year ago. Iris is a member of the Industrial Workers of the World anarcho-syndicalist union.

A defence group, formed to 'expose the blanket 'conspiracy' laws where police need no evidence to frame-up anyone they want to and to expose the activities of the Special Branch as Britain's Political Police' can be contacted at Box 123, Rising Free, 182 Upper St., London N.1.

Tories protect NF

Brighton: **Tories Protect N.F.** Brighton's Tory Council has banned the broad-based Anti-Nazi League from council buildings. In a full council meeting the Tories reaffirmed that they are the enemies of basic democratic freedoms and sympathetic to the propaganda of the fascists.

(Source: Brighton Voice May/June 78)

GARTHDEE TO GO RULES RUSSELL

The long battle to save the celebrated tenancy of Garthdee Farm seems to be over for the time being. But the tenants have said that they will fight on.

After a day of complicated

legal arguments in court on June 16th Sheriff Russell decided to reserve judgement for four weeks. On July 12th the tenants received the fateful news their tenancy was not to

be considered legal and they would have to move out.

The tenants intend to appeal but apart from some of the legal points in the Sheriff's judgement there are some other questions which could do to be answered. For example how did Mr Charles McWilliam, the current owner of Garthdee Farm, manage to obtain the farmhouse and six acres for £13,500? Aberdeen is not noted for its knockdown property prices.

Furthermore the court was told that Mr McWilliam wanted to use the house for family purposes, and yet Mr McWilliam did not in fact look at the house before he bought it. Very odd to say the least.



Buzby says:

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ADVERT

Central Destruction Area

A week or two ago, the ABERDEEN District Council took one more step towards fulfilling one of their most cherished ambitions—the total destruction of a large part of the city centre. The "Central Comprehensive Development Area" was again approved by a majority of the Council. The Liberal councillors — seven out of a total of forty-eight — argued for the abandonment of the scheme. But the Labour Party — the voice of the workers — continued their support for this property developers' bonanza.

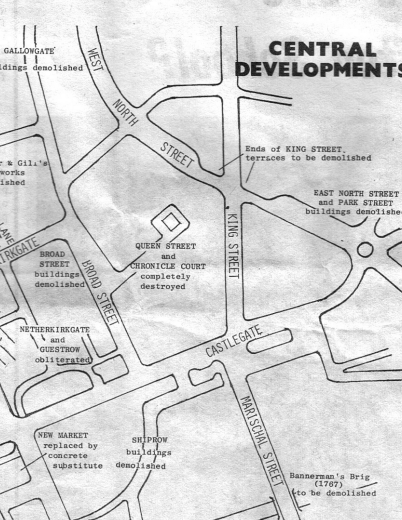
The C.C.D.A. is divided into two areas — Area A to be "redeveloped" by Great Universal Stores and Area B to be "redeveloped" by Bredero. Bredero is well-known for taking a keen interest in working-class affairs. Only three-and-a-half years ago they closed their depot in Leith at a time when the company was doing brisk business. What is likely to happen in both areas is the total destruction of most of the interesting buildings and their replacement by modern concrete erections. The buildings on Schoolhill and the surviving side of Upperkirkgate seem likely to survive. No doubt the council will congratulate itself heartily on its efforts to conserve the city's character.

The past

The plan shows those areas of the city centre which have been "redeveloped" since 1945, or are in the course of the same. Much of the areas could reasonably be described as "slums" and certainly some major work was necessary. But the area contained many pleasant buildings and in some sense represented the historical "heart" of the city. Around Netherkirkgate and Guestraw, although the actual buildings were mostly of the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, the general outline of the Mediaeval street plan was preserved. The narrow, winding streets gave the impression of a Mediaeval town and were, of course, a logical and sympathetic renewal of the ABERDEEN of those days. The buildings were

almost exclusively in granite, which made the area pretty well unique and, being the local stone, represented a direct link between the artificial City and its natural environment, a link established by the work and skills of its citizens.

Not everything was worth preserving: for one thing, the buildings were often too close together. But the old street plan and many of the individual buildings could have been restored. Two small flats can make a convenient modern dwelling. In some cases the entire interior of the building can be removed and new accommodation acceptable by mid-twentieth century standards can be built within the shell. The old ABERDEEN Council themselves have shown how successful this can be at Cruickshanks' Lodging near the Brig o' Balgownie. There is a house built of surface gatherings — which tend to be small and rounded stones held together by



be continued except that now, instead of being gradual and piecemeal, they will be sudden and total. "Comprehensive development" has come to ABERDEEN. Mind you, it got to most other places ten or twenty years ago and many of them are regretting it now. The Labour councillors, like the Bourbon dynasty on their return to the French throne in 1815, have "learnt nothing and forgotten nothing". The French were more resolute in dealing with the Bourbons than we have been with our lot — they threw them out after only fifteen years.

The future

Councillor Sewel — the District Council property tycoon — has thought up a startling new excuse for the comprehensive destruction area. Unless they go ahead with the development, we will have to "watch the city centre die." As a publicity stunt, this was a winner. It made the front page in the 'Evening Express'. As a prophecy, however, it would appear less useful. Every Thursday evening and Friday afternoon and every Saturday all day, crowds of shoppers seem to find plenty of interest in poor old St. Nicholas Street and George Street. But then what importance does a councillor attach to the behaviour of the citizenry when important things, like the destruction of city centres, are at stake.

We do not often have much to say in favour of our councillors. This is not an apology — they seldom deserve it. But the Liberals deserve to be congratulated on their stand on this question. Forbes Mac Callum, Liberal councillor for Powis, says: "I am sure that most Aberdonians will be appalled when they see the plans to bulldoze away the City Centre and replace it with the anonymous kind of development that so many other cities have suffered ten or fifteen years ago."

"There is still time for public opinion to make its voice heard before the council consider the applications by the developers for planning permission."

more on a stone or wooden replacement for badly-cracked lintels and sills, they just stuck in concrete — the cheap solution wins every time.

But for the old city centre, no such renewal was planned. It was gradually demolished, to be replaced by huge faceless offices, mostly housing the local authority's huge staff. Many buildings were destroyed although perfectly sound physically and in regular use, quite apart from their importance in historical and aesthetic terms.

Intelligent Style OF DEVELOPMENT

Loch Street Post Office of 1939 blends in well with surrounding buildings which are a century older, rather a lot of old buildings and dating from 1666, built on a rocky shelf a few yards from a flowing river has been turned into two pleasant council houses. Even here, the work is spoilt by unsympathetic repairs to the fabric. Rather than spend a little

more on a stone or wooden replacement for badly-cracked lintels and sills, they just stuck in concrete — the cheap solution wins every time.

But for the old city centre, no such renewal was planned. It was gradually demolished, to be replaced by huge faceless offices, mostly housing the local authority's huge staff. Many buildings were destroyed although perfectly sound physically and in regular use, quite apart from their importance in historical and aesthetic terms.

Of course there is Provost Skene's House — preserved, like a foetus in a bottle of formaldehyde, with its entire neighbourhood, including even the street on which it was numbered obliterated, and dominated by the huge and impersonal pile of St. Nicholas House. Skene's House is not conservation — it is conscience-salving.

But now, all the old policies of destruction are to



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CORRECTION

There was a typographical error in the last sentence of our story on Westerton Primary in our June issue. The sentence should have read: "Will a decision be made to press for a full investigation into the alleged misuse of funds and victimisation of teachers?"

Claimants Unions

We have received a letter from the Glasgow Peoples Press collective prompted by the "Right to Work" article in The Age Print No.3, describing how members of the collective are involved in Claimants Unions. They've asked us to pass on the message that if anyone would like more information on Claimants Unions and peoples rights on claiming supplementary benefit they can write to Glasgow Peoples Press, 146 Holland St., Glasgow.

PORNOGRAPHY — is it sexual liberation?

Today, there are around 50 million pornographic magazines sold every year in Britain and over £30 million are spent on openly-sold magazines alone. Pornographic material is predominantly geared to the male heterosexual market — the Mr. Averages of this world.

So what then are they buying? The bulk of pornographic material presents women as willing victims, objects to be used, bodies created for the sole purpose of pleasing men — even in lesbian and masturbation fantasies there is no doubt that the women are really performing for the male reader. All the women, from the smiling PAGE 3 pin-up, to the tinted, combed and painted *Playboy* nude to the hung, drawn and quartered body in pornography are not real women. When their clothes come off so do their feelings, emotions, intelligence and will. Their bodies are stripped, exposed and contorted to bolster the male ego which gets its kick and sense of power from viewings females as anonymous, panting playthings — objects to be used, abused and then discarded. Pornography, like rape, is a male invention, designed to dehumanise women, to reduce them to objects.



jects of sexual access. By making women powerless men can feel and maintain power for themselves.

If I find pornography disturbing and disgusting, does that mean then that I am a sexually-frustrated prude who would support Mary Whitehouse and The Festival of Light? Definitely not. I find myself as opposed to that lot as I am to pornography. However, I find myself agreeing (uneasily I admit) with Mary Whitehouse when she argues that pornography is anti-love and anti-sex but what I find really worrying is that Mary Whitehouse concentrates not just on images that distort, but on those that try to describe sex as it actually happens — genuine attempts to educate and explore e.g. sex education.

I am totally opposed to censorship since it is mainly used against those who try to inform and educate. For example, contraceptive information was illegal in this country until the 1930s because it was considered obscene and recently *Spare Rib* magazine

was banned in Ireland for showing women how to examine their breasts for cancer. Similarly, in 1971 *The Little Red School Book*, an anti-authoritarian publication giving information on drugs, sex, contraception and school was found obscene — yet another case of an attempt at more open attitudes to sex being repressed.

Being against censorship however does not mean that I believe pornography can be equated with sexual liberation. As far as I'm concerned, pornography is not a celebration of sexual freedom. It erects barriers to emotional and sexual openness. If men are encouraged to look at women in terms of their physical looks and performance in bed only, what hope is there that people will be able to explore each other with some sort of understanding, taking into account a person's full identity — emotional as well as physical.

Pornography is part of the legacy of male controlled and defined sexuality which exploits female sexual activity and prevents both men and men relating to each other sexually on equal terms.

Sex mags, however, are only one symptom of the underlying attitudes in our society and as such cannot be changed in isolation. One of our main concerns should be to change how sexuality itself is viewed. Mary Whitehouse sees sex as disgusting and wants to keep it hidden, to keep everyone from exploring and enjoying their own sexualit-

ies. She wants to preserve the status quo and thus preserve the stunted roles of women. She may attack pornography in the name of protecting women, but she does so to protect the nuclear family and the sanctity of marriage—institutions which oppress us.

So what is the alternative? It is extremely difficult to oppose pornography publicly and not be seen as a killjoy and a supporter of the type of morality advocated by Mary Whitehouse. Picketing shops which sell sex mags and cinemas which show blue movies may at first glance seem a good idea but unless it is made quite clear what is being attacked you are lumped in with The Festival of Light — after all, picketing sex films is one of their pastimes.



Recently, women in various parts of Britain have been organising marches against rape. In London they marched through Soho at night, plastering sex shops with stickers, spray-painting and shouting and chanting at the customers because they believe rape and pornography are related. They both deny women the status of human beings.

Aberdeen has no Soho, but it has its fair share of newsagents who sell sex mags and of advertising hoardings which are becoming more and more pornographic. Can't we do something about these?

Despite the "sexual liberation" we're supposed to have had, despite all the acres of naked flesh available in books and films, people don't generally spend much time talking about sex and sexuality — although dirty jokes abound at all-male gatherings, none of the men will dare betray his true feelings. But being able to talk openly and honestly about sex is one thing that may undermine the terrible two-some of Pornography and Puritanism.

Maybe we should also think about children and young people and should try to talk openly to them about sex and sexuality. If parents, teachers, youth workers, etc. were prepared to initiate discussions and answer questions honestly then we might prevent yet another generation growing up with a distorted view of what sex is actually about.

That may be our only hope.

What are your views on pornography? Do you agree with the arguments put forward here — or do you have another view? The Big Print welcomes readers' letters on the subject.

Injury within tent

By RONNIE LEE

I hope that what I am about to write will help to persuade people to boycott circuses with performing animals or menageries, and perhaps even to help campaign for an end to the use of animals in circuses.

CRUELTY

Cruelty to animals in circuses can be divided into two sections: cruelty in the confinement of wild creatures in menageries and cruelty in forcing animals to perform unnatural tricks.

IMAGINATION

The cruelty of the menagerie is pretty well self-evident. It cannot by any stretch of the imagination be said to be humane to confine any creature, let alone a naturally wild animal, to a small cage for most of its life. During the 'open season' for circuses which now aver-

ages eight or nine months a year, just about the only exercise these animals get is when they perform their 'tricks' in the ring.

Many people believe that the training of circus animals is all done by kindness but the evidence, much of which has been obtained from ex-employees of the circus — there is a great deal of secrecy surrounding circus animal training — shows very much the contrary.

BLOOD

There is evidence of:-

1. Spiked hooks being used to force elephants to perform tricks and to punish them when they do not behave 'properly' in front of the public the hooks are disguised by attaching coloured fibres to the end of the stick

2. Lions beaten on the snout with whips until blood streams from their noses. (Evidence of app-



3. Camels forced to rear up burning the pads of their fore-feet and sticking drawing pins into them. (Evidence of circus worker)
4. Bears being lashed on the head and muzzle. And these are just a few examples.

BOYCOTT

It would be quite possible for circuses to operate

without performing animals and menageries, as they have many skilled human entertainers. The general public should be encouraged to boycott circuses that use animals so that they are forced by economic necessity to use only human performers. Many animal protection/liberation organizations are currently campaigning against the use of animals in circuses. These campaigns take many forms including pickets and demonstrations, writing to the press, writing to local councillors asking them not to allow circuses with performing animals on local authority land, fly-posting, taking down circus posters and asking shopkeepers to take them down from their windows, and, in the case of the Animal Liberation Front, more militant action which may include damage to circus property.

Next issue: a former circus worker replies.

Freedom & Socialism

"Freedom without socialism is privilege and injustice, Socialism without freedom is tyranny."

The Aberdeen Libertarian Socialist Group aims to draw together people who, fed up with the present 'system' and disillusioned with the authoritarian versions of socialism, are looking around for an alternative.

We hold regular fortnightly discussion meetings which are open to all interested, whether they consider themselves libertarian socialists or not. The details for the meetings for August are on the back page. For more information write to us c/o The Big Print.

LETTER

Thanks to our reader 'Fairplay' for an interesting letter — we'll be investigating the events you describe and hope to include something about the episode in our next issue.

"THE CLASH" IN ABERDEEN!

GREAT CONCERT AFTER NIGHT IN CELLS

The first time we saw the Clash was back in early summer last year, at the University Union. I remember walking into the hall with no idea of what I was about to see, and reeling out an hour later, dazed by the sheer power and emotional intensity of the music, feeling a mixture of exhilaration, anger (at society and, by extension, at myself), and humility. For me, possibly the best concert ever. Since then the band have been touring extensively, have brought out one album, and are about to release their second. The Sex Pistols have split and most other punk bands have either disappeared or become semi-respectable, so there were a lot of misgivings when we heard the Clash were coming to the Music Hall. Had they gone for the money and had energy disappeared and the establishment defeated them?

It didn't take long to find out. Waiting for them to come on stage we talked to a girl punk who had been at Glasgow the night before, and she told us that two of the band had spent the night in jail, which was hardly what we were expecting to hear. Playing superstars in a big hotel, maybe, but... in jail?

Later the story emerged. The bouncers at the Apollo had been indiscriminately filling in kids during the concert, and although the band had done what they could, afterwards a fan accused Joe Strummer of doing nothing to help. Joe, who had evidently been in tears of exasperation in the dressing-room, lost his temper and smashed a lemonade bottle on the pavement. Immediately he was attacked by plain-clothes policemen who appeared from nowhere, wielding truncheons. Paul, the bassist, tried to rescue him, and they were both hauled off to the cells (and appeared in court the next day).

And so to the concert. Last year we stood among hip and laid-back students who were unsure of how to act in face of the violent sonic assault, but there were no reservations from the music Hall audience — they were there to enjoy themselves. The Clash represent what they think and feel, and provide a means of releasing their frustrations in a positive way. Although it wasn't all punks. There were quite a few interested rock

fans in their twenties, and at the other end, a kid in front of us who couldn't have been more than ten. It only took a couple of numbers to dispel any fears. The sound was excellent, serving to highlight the elements which make them so good — the solid rhythm section, powerful lead guitar and inimitable Joe Strummer voice. A lot of new songs we didn't know, delivered with all the power, commitment and energy that we had hoped for. There was one bit of agro down the front, but straight away the band stopped playing, appealed to the audience, and quick-

ly calmed everything down. But no real violence, no wrecking of seats — just enjoyment of a great rock band. There's a feeling you get from this band that I've never experienced with any other, and it must come down to their absolute honesty, the fact that they really do care about what they are doing, and about their audiences. They build up a feeling of positive energy and sheer enjoyment, not mindless violence as a lot of daily papers would have us believe, and I for one am grateful for being able to see them play two magnificent concerts.



JOE STRUMMER



NO SELLOUT

After meeting THE CLASH, both now and a year ago, there's no doubt there's a band with all the sincerity still intact. Still anti-establishment. Still dedicated to their fans. No one who meets the band could have any doubts about these things.

But what do THE CLASH stand for? According to Mick Jones, their guitarist, they want to be the best rock & roll band in the world. He believes they are the best in the world, and he may well be right. But they are not just a rock & roll band. They are a band with a vision, a band who see rock & roll as the most immediate and vital way of getting across to ordinary young people. Through their stance and their protest they hope to change the way people react to being pushed around by governments, employers, police and schools. They want to give people the strength to fight back.

But THE CLASH dislike the suggestion that they could have any solutions, political or otherwise, to offer people. However, they have an idealism and a set of standards which they believe in. They're absolutely opposed to violence, whether it's fans being attacked by bouncers or

it's the National Front beating up Blacks. While Mick Jones talked to us about voting for Labour at the next election (and 'hoping for the best') Joe Strummer, the group's lead singer, has said:

"What I believe in ultimately is the absence of all government and all restrictions because I believe if given the proper mental equipment they could grow up to be complete without any murder or crime."

These two views just about sum up the band. While they know instinctively how objectionable Thatcher's Tories are, Mick may have a naive hope that Labour are markedly different. Joe on the other hand talks about "all those cunts at Westminster mucking about and scratching each other's arseholes". He seems to be thinking beyond conventional politics (he has even said that the methods used by the Red Brigades are a justifiable way of attacking the system).

These stances, though both questionable, serve to show that THE CLASH have no pretences at having final solutions or plans. Their strength lies in their commitment and their continuing development. They are learning all the time. They are intelligent. They read books. They keep in touch. Their anti-establishment stance has been consistent. There's every chance that they'll become even more politically aware as they grow older.

EVENTS

12-13 Aug. ROWANFAIR.
"CRAFT...MUSIC...THEATRE...JOY..."
At Rowanbank, Glen of Newmill, Keith, Banffshire.
ADMISSION...50p.
Children free.
Craft stalls...Folk music
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Real Ale...Pony rides...
Greasy pole...Toddler's
Corner...Fiddlers...Bill
Fulton...Dragons...etc. etc.
Stalls can be booked by
writing to above address
SOON.

WOMENS LIBERATION MEETINGS
at APP, 163 King St. 8pm.
July 24th: "Women & Rape"
July 31st: "Abortion and
Contraception"
Aug. 7th: "Childcare"
Aug. 14th: "Women
& the Media"

WEEKEND CONFERENCE ON
STRUCTURAL UNEMPLOYMENT
The facts, background, and
consequences. Local and
national speakers, films,
discussion. Creche provided.
Sept. 2nd/3rd in the
Trades Council Club, Adel-
phy. Organised by the
Workers Educational Association
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WEA, Kiddybrewster Shopping
Centre. Tel. 494016.

libertarian
socialist group
August 1st - 163 King Street,
COUNTERING CONDITIONING 8pm

August 15th - 62 Club, Summer
Street, GENETIC ENGINEERING -
IS THERE LIFE AFTER BIRTH 7pm

August 29th - 62 Club, Summer
Street, WHAT IS LIBERTARIAN
SOCIALISM? 8pm

September 12th - 62 Club, 8pm
Summer Street, NUCLEAR POWER